



HR0521

LRB098 12802 MST 47289 r

1

HOUSE RESOLUTION

2

WHEREAS, The current Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) was created in statute by the Illinois General Assembly in 1973; and

3

4

5

WHEREAS, There were 3 service boards created under the umbrella oversight of the RTA; and

6

7

WHEREAS, One of those service boards, METRA, created in 1983, has the oversight responsibility for operation of the commuter rail system throughout the northeast area of Illinois, which includes Cook County and its surrounding collar counties, making METRA the second-largest commuter rail system in the nation; and

8

9

10

11

12

13

WHEREAS, The METRA Board of Directors, a board of public officials appointed by public officials, is the oversight entity for the METRA system operation in conjunction with a transit professional who is the METRA Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of METRA; and

14

15

16

17

18

WHEREAS, The Regional Transportation Authority receives hundreds of millions of dollars from various taxpayers sources, including monies from the State of Illinois' General Revenue Fund, which is funded by State income tax revenues and the

19

20

21

1 State sales tax revenues paid by individuals and corporations  
2 throughout the State; and

3 WHEREAS, Over \$340 million flows from the General Revenue  
4 Fund to the Public Transportation Fund, which helps fund the  
5 RTA; and

6 WHEREAS, A significant portion of the Public  
7 Transportation Fund flows through the RTA to METRA; and

8 WHEREAS, The METRA Board of Directors must approve a budget  
9 which properly utilizes these public funds; and

10 WHEREAS, System-generated METRA operating revenues  
11 comprise roughly 52% of METRA's funding; and

12 WHEREAS, The fares that METRA riders pay make up a large  
13 portion of that 52% of funding; and

14 WHEREAS, Both taxpayers and fare payers who provide so much  
15 by way of funding to the operation of METRA have a reasonable  
16 expectation that the dollars they are putting into the system  
17 will be used in a responsible, efficient, and transparent  
18 manner; and

19 WHEREAS, The METRA Board of Directors recently entered into

1 an employment termination agreement with the METRA Executive  
2 Director; and

3 WHEREAS, That employment termination agreement included a  
4 significant financial sum and other personal benefits to the  
5 Executive Director for early termination of his contract; and

6 WHEREAS, This termination agreement and the financial sums  
7 involved are far in excess of what would be considered normal  
8 when dealing with public monies; and

9 WHEREAS, The contributing factors and deliberations  
10 leading up to that termination agreement were initially  
11 withheld from the public by the Chairman and the members of the  
12 METRA Board of Directors and were released only after separate  
13 public hearings by the RTA and the Mass Transit Committee of  
14 the House of Representatives; and

15 WHEREAS, Dealing in secrecy violates the public trust that  
16 has been placed in the Board of Directors and negates the  
17 expectation of transparency that the public rightly has when it  
18 comes to the handling of public dollars; and

19 WHEREAS, All reports indicate that it was the Chairman of  
20 the METRA Board of Directors who was instrumental in passing  
21 the termination agreement; therefore, be it

1           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
2 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
3 the members of the House of Representatives call on the  
4 Chairman of the METRA Board of Directors to resign his position  
5 as Chairman and his position on the METRA Board of Directors in  
6 light of his poor and inappropriate handling of the public  
7 funds related to the termination agreement entered into by the  
8 METRA Board with the METRA Executive Director; and be it  
9 further

10           RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives call on the  
11 METRA Board of Directors to elect a new Chairman who  
12 understands the important public role that METRA plays in our  
13 regional transportation network and who will operate as  
14 Chairman in a transparent and open manner that restores the  
15 public trust in the METRA system; and be it further

16           RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
17 presented to the Chairman and each member of the METRA Board of  
18 Directors.